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Item 2 of the provisional agenda*
Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Report of the Bureau of the Commission on Population and Development on its intersessional meetings

I. Introduction

1. At its thirtieth session, in 1997, the Commission on Population and Development authorized its Bureau to hold intersessional meetings in preparation for its sessions on a yearly basis (E/1997/25, para. 52). The Commission subsequently stressed the importance of making available written reports on those meetings at the earliest opportunity (see Commission decision 2005/2) and requested its Bureau to meet as frequently as necessary in preparation for the annual sessions of the Commission (see Commission resolution 2006/1). In accordance with Commission resolution 2006/1, the Bureau held four meetings between September 2014 and January 2015. They were held at Headquarters on the following dates: 12 September 2014, 6 November 2014, 9 December 2014 and 13 January 2015. At its fourth meeting, the Bureau decided to hold a fifth meeting, on 10 March 2015, to address matters remaining before the resumed session of the Commission, to be held from 13 to 17 April 2015.

2. The four meetings of the Bureau were attended by the Chair, Ms. Bénédicte Frankinet (Belgium), Mr. Rubén Armando Escalante Hasbún (El Salvador), Mr. Mesbah Ansari Dogaheh (Islamic Republic of Iran), Ms. Lidija Bubanja (Serbia) and Ms. Christine Kalamwina (Zambia). In addition, Mr. Guy Rayée (Belgium) attended all four meetings. Also present at all meetings were staff of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the Secretary of the Commission from the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and representatives of the United Nations Population Fund (as observers).

3. The present report provides a summary of the discussions of the Bureau at those meetings, including the conclusions reached and the recommendations made.

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II. Summary of the deliberations of the Bureau

A. Organization of work for the forty-eighth session of the Commission

4. The Bureau reviewed the organization of work for the forty-eighth session and decided that on Monday, 13 April, and Tuesday, 14 April, the time slots between 11.30 a.m. and 1 p.m. would be used for presentations by keynote speakers, followed by interactive discussions. It also decided that on Wednesday, 15 April, the time slot between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. would be used for an expert panel. The Bureau reasoned that, by allocating more time for the keynote speeches and panel discussion than in previous years, the Commission would encourage a more interactive debate.

5. The Bureau also decided that informal consultations on draft proposals would begin on the Tuesday before the resumption of the session and continue daily until Friday, 10 April. The Bureau further decided that the afternoon of Tuesday, 14 April, and the entire day on Thursday, 16 April, would be dedicated exclusively to informal consultations. It therefore decided to schedule consideration of agenda item 6, "Programme implementation and future programme of work of the Secretariat in the field of population", for the morning of Friday, 17 April.

B. Keynote speakers

6. In its decision 2005/2, the Commission welcomed the format of inviting keynote speakers to address the sessions of the Commission and requested the Bureau to make the arrangements necessary for their participation and to inform States members of the Commission accordingly. Pursuant to that decision, the Bureau decided that two individuals would be invited to address the Commission during the designated times slots on Monday, 13 April, and Tuesday, 14 April, speaking on topics relating to the theme of the forty-eighth session, "Realizing the future we want: integrating population issues into sustainable development, including in the post-2015 development agenda". The Bureau also decided to organize an expert panel of four speakers (with a moderator) during the designated time slot on Wednesday, 15 April, to address the topic of "Integrating population issues into sustainable development".

7. For each speaking role, the Bureau agreed on a slate of at least two candidates, ranked in order of preference, and requested the Secretariat to contact the individuals to invite them to participate. It was agreed that, should one or more of the preferred speakers be unavailable, the Secretariat would proceed through the list until an available speaker was identified and confirmed. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to accord high priority to achieving gender balance, broad regional representation and diversity of expertise in compiling the slate of speakers and panellists. In addition, the Secretariat was to keep the Bureau well informed about the process as it unfolded.

C. Participation of relevant United Nations entities in the forty-eighth session of the Commission

8. The Bureau noted that the topic of the forty-eighth session was relevant to the work of many entities of the United Nations system. It was therefore agreed that the Chair would inform all relevant agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system of the dates and theme of the session and encourage them to participate actively therein and to consider organizing side events during the session.

D. Communication of the Chair with members of the Commission

9. The Bureau requested the Chair to write to all members of the Commission to underscore the desirability of including technical experts on population issues as members of their delegations for the forty-eighth session. The Chair was also requested to inform the members of the Commission about how to gain access to preliminary versions of the documentation for the session and to explain the schedule of informal consultations.

E. Relationship between the Commission and the Economic and Social Council

10. The Bureau agreed that the President of the Economic and Social Council would make a significant contribution to the work of the Commission at its forty-eighth session and requested the Chair to invite him to launch the discussion on agenda item 5, "General debate on the contribution of population and development issues to the theme of the annual ministerial review in 2015", as had been done at previous sessions of the Commission.

F. Themes for future sessions of the Commission

11. The Bureau recalled decision 2014/101 of the Commission, by which the Commission had decided to postpone the decision on the special theme for its forty-ninth session until its forty-eighth session, in 2015. In selecting a theme, the Bureau took note of the themes that the Commission had recently covered, in addition to events and activities in other bodies of the United Nations, especially the General Assembly.

12. The Bureau recommended that "Monitoring the post-2015 development agenda: strengthening the demographic evidence base" should be the theme for its forty-ninth session. The Bureau reasoned that, by drawing the Commission's attention in 2016 to data and evidence for informed policymaking in the field of population and development, the discussions could focus on population-related topics contained in the new goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda, together with the need for pertinent data and monitoring.

G. Resolutions and decisions

13. The Bureau recommended that the Commission should consider adopting the following three decisions:

(a) To adopt "Monitoring the post-2015 development agenda: strengthening the demographic evidence base" as the theme for its forty-ninth session and to postpone the decision on the theme for its fiftieth session, in 2017, until the forty-ninth session in order to take into account the overall theme of the Economic and Social Council for 2017;

(b) To consider the Commission's methods of work at its forty-ninth session and to request the Secretariat to prepare a note on those methods as part of the documentation for that session;

(c) To adopt a draft agenda for its forty-ninth session in accordance with the previous two decisions.

14. Furthermore, after extensive discussions regarding possible options for the outcome of the forty-eighth session, the Chair announced that she would table a substantive resolution on the theme of the session. The Chair requested the Secretariat to assist in the preparation of a zero draft of the resolution, drawing on the main conclusions set out in the reports of the Secretary-General prepared for the session and also taking into account the proposal by the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and other key elements of the continuing discussion on the post-2015 development agenda. She indicated that she planned to distribute the zero draft to the members of the Commission by Tuesday, 17 March.

H. Availability of documents for the Commission

15. The Bureau stressed the importance of the timely availability of documents for the forty-eighth session of the Commission in order to facilitate the preparation of statements by delegations. The Bureau endorsed the posting on the Internet of unedited, English-only versions of all Commission documents as soon as they became available, in advance of their release in the six official languages of the United Nations.

I. Briefings for member States

16. In response to an earlier request by the Bureau, a substantive briefing was held in New York on Thursday, 22 January 2015, pertaining to the state of scientific knowledge regarding some of the main substantive issues to be discussed by the Commission. A brief overview of global population trends was given and two interactive panel discussions were held, one on population dynamics, economic development and poverty and the other on population, resources, the environment and climate change. Furthermore, at the fourth meeting of the Bureau, in response to a request to organize a briefing for member States on organizational matters and logistics a few weeks ahead of the resumed session, the Secretariat indicated that that briefing had been scheduled for Thursday, 12 March.

III. Recommendations of the Bureau

17. **The Bureau recommended the adoption of the draft organization of work for the forty-eighth session of the Commission.**

18. **The Bureau decided that two keynote speakers and a panel of four experts and one moderator would be invited to address the Commission on the special theme of the forty-eighth session, "Realizing the future we want: integrating population issues into sustainable development, including in the post-2015 development agenda".**

19. **The Bureau requested the Chair to inform all relevant agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system of the dates and theme of the session and to encourage them to participate actively therein and to consider organizing side events during the session.**

20. **The Bureau requested the Chair to write to all members of the Commission to inform them of the dates of the session and to remind them of the theme, suggesting the agenda items under which interventions were welcome and underlining the desirability of having technical experts form part of their delegations. In addition, the Chair would inform the members of the Commission how to gain access to preliminary versions of the documentation for the session.**

21. **The Bureau requested the Chair to write to States not members of the Commission to inform them of the dates and theme of the session and to provide information on how to gain access to preliminary versions of the documentation for the session.**

22. **The Bureau decided to invite the Secretary-General to participate in the opening of the forty-eighth session of the Commission and to invite the President of the Economic and Social Council to address the Commission under item 5 of the provisional agenda.**

23. **The Bureau recommended that the Commission should decide upon the theme for its forty-ninth session at its forty-eighth session, while postponing a decision on the theme for its fiftieth session, in 2017, until its forty-ninth session. Furthermore, the Bureau recommended "Monitoring the post-2015 development agenda: strengthening the demographic evidence base" as the special theme for its forty-ninth session.**

24. **The Bureau recommended that the Commission should decide to consider its methods of work at its forty-ninth session and request the Secretariat to prepare a note on those methods as part of the documentation for that session. Furthermore, the Bureau recommended that the Commission should adopt a decision on the provisional agenda of the forty-ninth session in accordance with the decisions regarding the special theme and the methods of work.**

25. **The Bureau recommended that unedited, English-only versions of all Commission documents should be posted on the Internet as soon as they became available, in advance of their release in the six official languages of the United Nations.**

26. **The Bureau requested the Secretariat to organize a substantive briefing for States members of the Commission before the resumption of the forty-**

eighth session and another briefing focusing on the organization and logistics of the session a few weeks before the resumption. The date for the substantive briefing was set for Thursday, 22 January 2015. The briefing on organization and logistics for the forty-eighth session was scheduled for Thursday, 12 March 2015.